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PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE
UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON
HUMAN SETTLEMENTS (HABITAT II)
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Agenda item 4

OUTCOME OF THE CONFERENCE: DRAFT STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES AND COMMITMENTS AND GLOBAL PLAN OF ACTION

II. Goals and principles (paras. 13-22)

(Section II of the draft Habitat agenda)

Text submitted by Working Group II on the basis of negotiations held on document A/CONF.165/PC.3/4

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II. GOALS AND PRINCIPLES

13. We, the States participating in the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), [, are committed to a political, economic, environmental, ethical and spiritual vision of human settlements based on the principles of equality, solidarity, partnership, human dignity, respect and cooperation. We] adopt the goals and principles of adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world. [We believe that attaining these goals will promote a world more stable and free from injustice and conflict and contribute to just, comprehensive and lasting peace and to global equitable economic and social development and environmental protection.] [Civil, ethnic and religious strife, nuclear armament, armed conflicts, alien and colonial domination, foreign occupation, international economic imbalance, coercive economic measures, poverty, organized crime, and terrorism in all its forms are destructive to sustainable human settlements development and should therefore be renounced by all States.] [We believe that attaining these goals will promote a world more stable and free from injustice and conflict. Civil, ethnic and religious strife, violations of human rights, armed conflicts, terrorism, foreign aggression or occupation are destructive to human settlements and should therefore be renounced by all States. At the national level we will reinforce peace by promoting tolerance, non-violence and respect for diversity, and by settling disputes by peaceful means. At the local level, the prevention of crime and the promotion of sustainable communities are essential to the attainment of safe and secure societies. Crime prevention through social development is one crucial key to these goals. At the international level, we will promote international peace and security and make and support all efforts to settle international disputes by peaceful means in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.] We reaffirm and are guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and we reaffirm our commitment to ensure the realization of the human rights set out in international instruments [including the right to adequate housing as provided for] in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child [, taking into account that the right to adequate housing should be realized progressively]. We reaffirm that all human rights - civil, cultural, economic, political and social - are universal, indivisible and interdependent and interrelated. We subscribe to the following principles and goals to guide us in our actions.

I.

14. Equitable human settlements are those in which all people, without discrimination of any kind as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status have equal access to housing, infrastructure, health services, adequate food and water, education and open spaces. In addition, such human settlements provide equal opportunity for a productive and freely chosen livelihood; equal access to economic resources, including the right to inheritance, the ownership of land and other property, credit, natural resources and appropriate technologies; for personal, spiritual, religious, cultural and social

development; for participation in public decision-making; for equal rights and obligations with regard to the conservation and use of natural and cultural resources; and equal access to mechanisms to ensure that rights are not violated. The empowerment of women and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, whether rural or urban, are fundamental to sustainable human settlements development.

II.

15. Eradication of poverty is essential for sustainable human settlements. The principle of poverty eradication is based on the framework adopted by the World Summit for Social Development and on the relevant outcomes of other major United Nations conferences, including the objective of meeting the basic needs of all people, especially those living in poverty, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, particularly in the developing countries where poverty is acute, as well as the objective of enabling all women and men to attain secure and sustainable livelihoods through freely chosen and productive employment and work.

III.

16. [Sustainable development is essential to human settlements development, while giving full consideration for the needs and necessities of achievement of economic growth in all countries, particularly in developing countries. Special consideration needs to be given to the specific situation of countries with economies in transition.] Human settlements shall be planned, developed and improved in a manner that takes full account of sustainable development principles and all its components, as set out in Agenda 21 and other related outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. Sustainable human settlements development ensures economic development, employment opportunities and social progress, in harmony with the environment. It incorporates, among the principles of the Rio Declaration which are equally important and other outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, that of the precautionary approach, pollution prevention, respect for the carrying capacity of ecosystems, and preservation of opportunities for future generations. Production, consumption and transport should be managed in ways that protect and conserve the stock of resources while drawing upon them. Science and technology have a crucial role in shaping sustainable human settlements and sustaining the ecosystems they depend upon. Sustainability of human settlements entails their balanced geographical distribution or other appropriate distribution in keeping with national conditions, the maintenance of biodiversity and cultural diversity, promotion of economic and social development, and human health and education, as well as air, water, vegetation and soil qualities at standards sufficient to sustain human life and well-being for all time.

IV.

17. The quality of life of the people depends, among other economic, social, environmental and cultural factors on the physical conditions and spatial characteristics of our villages, towns and cities. City lay-out and aesthetics, land-use patterns, population and building densities, transportation and ease of access for all to basic goods, services and public amenities have crucial

bearing on the livability of settlements. This is particularly important to vulnerable and disadvantaged persons, many of whom face barriers in access to shelter and in participating in shaping the future of their settlements. People's needs for community and their aspirations for more livable neighbourhoods and settlements should guide the process of design, management and maintenance of human settlements. Objectives of this endeavour include protecting public health, providing for safety and security conditions, education, and social integration, promoting equality, respect for diversity and cultural identities, increased accessibility for persons with disabilities, and preservation of historic, spiritual, religious and culturally significant buildings and districts, respecting local landscapes and treating the local environment with respect and care. It is also of crucial importance that spatial diversification and mixed uses of types of housing and services be promoted at the local level in order to meet the diversity of needs and expectations.

V.

18. The family is the basic unit of society and as such should be strengthened. It is entitled to receive comprehensive protection and support. In different cultural, political and social systems, various forms of the family exist. The rights, capabilities and responsibilities of family members must be respected. Human settlements planning should take into account the constructive role of the family in design, development and management of such settlements. All necessary conditions for its integration, preservation, improvement, and protection within adequate shelter, with access to basic services and sustainable livelihood, should be facilitated.

VI.

19. All people have basic rights and must also accept their responsibility to respect and protect the rights of others - including future generations - and to contribute actively to the common good. Sustainable human settlements are those that, inter alia, generate a sense of citizenship and identity, cooperation and dialogue for the common good, and a spirit of voluntarism and civic engagement, where all people are encouraged and have equal opportunity to participate in decision-making and development. Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, have a responsibility to ensure access to education and to protect their population's health, safety and general welfare. This requires, as appropriate, establishing policies, laws and regulations for both public and private activities, encouraging responsible private activities in all fields, facilitating community groups' participation, adopting transparent procedures, encouraging public-spirited leadership and public-private partnerships, and helping people to understand and exercise their rights and responsibilities through open and effective participatory processes, universal education and information dissemination.

VII.

20. Partnerships among countries and among all actors within countries from public, private, voluntary, and community-based organizations, the cooperative sector, non-governmental organizations, and individuals are essential to the

achievement of sustainable human settlements development and the provision of adequate shelter for all and basic services. Partnerships can integrate and mutually support objectives of broad-based participation through, inter alia, forming alliances, pooling resources, sharing knowledge, contributing skills and capitalizing on comparative advantages of collective actions. The processes can be made more effective by strengthening civil organizations at all levels. Every effort must be made to encourage collaboration and partnership of all sectors of society and among all actors in decision-making processes as appropriate.

VIII.

21. Solidarity with those who are less fortunate, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, including people living in poverty, as well as tolerance, non-discrimination and cooperation among all people, families and communities are foundations for social cohesion. Solidarity, cooperation and assistance should be enhanced by the international community as well as by States and all other relevant actors to respond to the challenges of human settlements development. The international community and governments at all appropriate levels are called upon to promote sound and effective policies and instruments, thereby strengthening cooperation among governments and non-governmental organizations, as well as to mobilize complementary resources to meet these challenges.

IX.

22. [To safeguard the global interest of present and future generations in human settlements is one of the fundamental goals of the international community. The implementation of the Global Plan of Action will require an increased flow of new and additional financial resources to developing countries in order to cover the incremental costs of the actions they have to undertake to deal with human settlements problems and to accelerate sustainable development.]

Proposals

European Union

22. [To safeguard the global interest of present and future generations in human settlements is one of the fundamental goals of the international community. As impacts of poverty and urban development attain international and even global dimensions, international cooperation and the coordination of national policies on a global and regional level is essential to achieving sustainable human settlements; in particular technical and institutional cooperation and information exchange are important. External financial resources are needed in some cases to assist in the achievement of the objectives of adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world. These should be mobilized from public and private sources.]

Group of 77 and China

22. [To safeguard the global interest of present and future generations in the provision of adequate shelter and human settlements is one of the fundamental goals of the international community. The implementation of the Global Plan of Action will require an increased flow of new and additional financial resources to developing countries to support their national efforts to deal with human settlements problems and adequate shelter and to accelerate sustainable development. Existing international cooperation and cooperation mechanisms be revitalized and enhanced, particularly the Commission on Human Settlements and the UNCHS (Habitat). Countries shall cooperate in the spirit of global partnership bearing in mind that they have common but differentiated responsibilities. In this respect, the developed countries recognize the responsibility they have as far as international cooperation is concerned in view of the technologies and financial resources they command. At the same time, it will require an effective coordination among governments and institutions as well as other forms of international cooperation particularly the creation of an enabling international economic environment, transfer of technology, information exchange and technical cooperation.]

Mexico

[22. Add, at end of paragraph: These flows should be accompanied by collective commitments and concrete measures on technical cooperation, training programmes and information exchange.]

Philippines

[22. The Philippines supports the inclusion of paragraph 22 particularly with respect to the increased flow of new and additional financial resources.]

United States of America

[22. The formulation and implementation of strategies for human settlements development are the primary responsibility of each country at the national, sub-national, and local levels and should take into account the economic, social and environmental diversity of conditions in each country. These actions can be considerably enhanced by the efforts of the international community, to the degree that resources permit. Members of the international community should, bilaterally or through multilateral organizations, support efforts of governments at all levels to foster an enabling environment for human settlements cooperation, coordination, and development.]

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22. [See: A/CONF.165/PC.3/INF.6, p. 21]

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[22 bis. Bilateral and multilateral cooperation should be enhanced in order to support the implementation of national shelter strategies of developing countries. International cooperation should also be strengthened to assist the developing countries in their capacity-building efforts in this regard.]